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FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0815  
INFO RUEHZA/WHA CENTRAL AMERICAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA PRIORITY 2606  
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA PRIORITY 0701  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEHRC/DEPT OF AGRICULTURE WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUCPDO/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC PRIORITY  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/OSD WASHDC PRIORITY  
RHMFISS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC//J3-WHEM/J3-SOD/J5-WHEM//  
RHMFISS/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL PRIORITY

UNCLAS PANAMA 001193

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

STATE FOR WHA/CEN - TELLO & GREENE & FOR WHA/EPSC ALSO FOR  
EB/TPP/BTA -LAMPRON  
STATE PASS USTR -EISSENSTAT AND SHIGETOMI USDOC/MAC -  
GAISFORD

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [ECON](#) [ETRD](#) [PM](#)  
SUBJECT: PANAMA NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OVERWHELMINGLY RATIFIES  
TPA

REF: PANAMA 01095

11. (U) Panama's National Assembly voted overwhelmingly to  
ratify the U.S. - Panama TPA on July 11, 2007. Fifty eight

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members of the assembly voted in favor of the TPA, three  
voted against it (Mireya Lasso, Miguel Fanovich, and Enrique  
Garrido), one member (Wigberto Quintero) abstained, and nine  
were not present. Those that voted against the TPA said  
there was not enough time for representatives to read the  
entire contents of the agreement and gain an understanding of  
the impact of its implementation. Vice Minister of Trade  
Carmen Gisela Vergara noted publicly that she clearly  
explained all that transpired during the negotiations, the  
gains that were made, and expectations concerning the various  
sectors. Vice President Samuel Lewis Navarro said that the  
next task will be to obtain ratification by the U.S. Congress  
and work along side various sectors to implement the  
agreement.

12. (U) The Assembly ratified the TPA minutes before  
anti-TPA protesters showed up in front of the Assembly's  
building. Led by the National Front for Economic and Social  
Rights (Frenadeso), the protesters claimed that the TPA did  
not represent the interest of the people and that the U.S.  
would have disproportionately larger gains in regard to  
tariff reductions than Panama as a result of the TPA.

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COMMENT:  
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13. (U) This overwhelming vote for the TPA reflects the  
broad political consensus in Panama for further trade  
openings. It also reflects the GOP's concerted outreach  
campaigns over the past six months to sell the TPA's merits.  
As reported in reftel # 01095, the GOP also sought this quick  
ratification to signal its seriousness to the U.S. congress.  
END COMMENT

Eaton